



A walk with artist Stan Kuiperi thorough the landscape of his mind.
“Between Heaven and Earth: Guardians of the Landscape”

Renowned Aruban artist Stan Kuiperi conducted a tour for a group of art lovers on Thursday night. It was a walking tour through the Access Art Gallery, where his current exhibition “Entre Cielo y Tera: Guardiannan di e Paisahe” is now on display. For a number of years, Stan has seen his artistic vision focused on Aruba’s nature and natural life, and this collection in particular looks at the dramatic beauty of the “Cadushi Largo” those tall cactus that reach up dramatically toward the heavens.

Walking through the rooms of the Access Art Gallery, located in downtown Oranjestad, on the main street, is as if being transported momentarily to the wilds of the Arikok National Park, where the cactus dominates.

In fact, that same feeling of openness and tranquility is often felt as one contemplates the canvasses, particularly if the entire room is taken as an environment, rather than looking at each work individually. For this reason, the works have been grouped in certain similar concepts, depicting different times of the day. Cool light blues with a hint of the glow of the rising sun greet you as you enter the gallery, while the brilliant oranges and golds of the midday heat warm another room. Yet another chamber is devoted to the cool dark of night, when the cactus flower transports one to the time of the “Dama de la Noche,” the beautiful flower of the cactus that only blooms after dark.

Artist Stan Kuiperi explains that his preoccupation with this subject is partly borne from his concern for the endangerment of Aruba’s nature and a reminder to appreciate and conserve it. One viewer on Thursday evening commented that the paintings did not show the dangerous aspects of the cactus, with their prickly spines, but very likely one can consider that intentional on the part of the artist or simply that he only sees their beauty and value, and not the negative aspects. Aside from helping to maintain the environment and prevent erosion, the Cadusi Largo provides a fruit that is used in local cooking, construction material and provides water for the wild donkeys. One could consider this a simile on to how one looks at life, difficult and full of thorns, or beautiful and bountiful. Cactus are usually not considered the most beautiful of plants, but in the eyes of Stan Kuiperi, they are very beautiful indeed. He feels they have a “magical energy” that exists in all of us, “they are rooted in the earth, but raise their arms towards heaven, sending a prayer that we should help to protect and preserve them.”

This exhibit can be viewed daily at the Access Art Gallery. For more information contact them at 588-7837.